

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /084 W

-----041019Z 019275 /10

R 040856Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2959

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1298

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FT PINT PFOR FR ET SO

SUBJ: TRENDS IN TFAI

1. ASSISTANT ARMY ATTACHE VISITED DJIBOUTI FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 2.
WELL INFORMED FRENCH MILITARY SOURCE MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN DJIBOUTI:

A) POPULAR LIVERATIONS MOVEMENT (MPL) GAINING STRENGTH,
PRIMARILY AT EXPENSE OF NATIONAL UNION FOR INDEPENDENCE (UNI).
MPL APPARENTLY CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE GRASS ROOTS CAMPAIGN WHILE
UNI IN GENERAL LIMITING ITS ACTIVITIES TO SPEECH MAKING.
SOURCE STATED MPL THREAT TO INTERNAL STABILITY OF TFAI BOTH REAL
AND GROWING.

B) AFAR LIVERATION FRONT (ALF) HAS DISINTEGRATED, AND ITS ACTI-
VITIES NOW THAT OF SHIFTA BANDS. ALF ACCEPTING SUPPORT FORM GSDR
TO INTERDICT ASSAB ROAD. COMMENT: EMBASSY AWARE OF PAST GSDR
SUPPORT FOR ALF. HOWEVER, ALF EFFORTS TO DISRUPT CONVOYS AND
TRAFFIC ON ASSAB ROAD HAVE BEEN MINIMAL.

C) DJIBOUTI - INTERNAL DISTURBANCES WITHIN CITY OF DJIBOUTI
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INCREASING, AND FRENCH PLAN INCREASE SIZE OF FRENCH GENDARMARIE
WITHIN CITY. TWO INTERCOMMUNAL INCIDENTS INVOLVING SEVERAL
DEATHS TOOK PLACE IN CITY DURING ATTACHE'S VISIT. FIGHTING TOOK
PLACE IN OPEN AREA BETWEEN AFAR AND ISSA QUARTERS. FRENCH HAVE
APPARENTLY INCREASED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MOTORIZED AND FOOT
PATROLS WITHIN CITY.

D) ID CARDS -ID ISSUING PROCEDURE HAD BEEN DIFFICULT TO

CONTROL, AS ONLY TWO WITNESSES REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ID IN LIEU
OTHER DOCUMENTATION. AT LEAST 3,000 AFARS INTERCEPTED BY FRENCH
FORCES IN FEBRUARY WHILE ATTEMPTING ENTER TFAI TO OBTAIN ID
CARDS. ON OTHER SIDE OF COIN, AFAR LEADERSHIP UNHAPPY OVER
LARGE NUMBER OF NONRESIDENT ISSAS WHO OBTAINED CARDS. AFAR-ISSA
HOSTILITY REPORTEDLY INTENSIFYING.

E) ALI AREF -ALI AREF POLITICALLY ACTIVE BEHIND SCENES
AND REPORTEDLY ON EPMG PAYROLL.

F) FRENCH PRESENCE -FRENCH INTENT TO MAINTAIN OR INCREASE
SIZE OF MILITARY AND PARAMILITARY FORCES IN TFAI IN PERIOD PRIOR
TO INDEPENDENCE. NEW ARRIVALS ARE COMING WITHOUT DEPENDENTS.
AT END OF SCHOOL YEAR, LARGE NUMBER OF FRENCH DEPENDENTS EXPECTED
TO DEPART FOR SUMMER. DEPENDENTS WHO DEPART WILL APPARENTLY
NOT RETURN UNTIL SEPTEMBER OR UNTIL POLITICAL-MILITARY SITUATION
CLARIFIED.

2. COMMENT: STATEMENTS A THROUGH E OF FRENCH SOURCE GENERALLY
SQUARE WITH INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN ADDIS. WE UNABLE TO
VERIFY HIS COMMENTS ON FRENCH PRESENCE, BUT BELIEVE IT LOGICAL
AND PRUDENT COURSE WHICH HAS RING OF AUTHENTICITY.
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